



News Release

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Laboratory updated: new high-tech addition to state laboratories opens today

More than 5 million tests performed at the Shoreline facility each year

OLYMPIA — Today, community and public health leaders opened a new addition to the cramped quarters the state's Public Health Laboratories have worked in for the past 25 years. The addition was necessary to keep up with testing demand due to population growth, new infectious diseases, and changes in laboratory testing and safety technologies.

"People in Washington are affected by the work of our staff in these labs every day," said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. "This new addition increases our space for everyday work, and better prepares us for the diseases of today and the health threats of tomorrow."

Just about every family in the state has a connection to the state laboratories. Blood samples from all newborn babies in Washington are tested for genetic conditions and other health problems. Foodborne illness outbreaks linked to *E. coli*, *Salmonella* and other bacteria are investigated, our state's water quality is monitored, shellfish are tested for bacteria and toxins, environmental health hazards are identified, and infectious diseases like whooping cough are identified, tracked, and monitored.

"This is a very impressive facility," said Scott Becker, Executive Director of the Association of Public Health Laboratories. "You have the specialized equipment and highly qualified experts who give us the answers we need to quickly identify threats and spot opportunities for life saving actions."

Since the lab moved into the current facility more than two decades ago, our state has grown by about 2 million people and the demand for testing has outgrown available space. Improvements were made possible through state and federal investments. [See photos and learn more](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) about our new lab facilities on our website.

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